

MOBILE, ALABAMA
PRESS

E - 71,354
S - 91,380

JUL 9 1965

Red Challenge To Hemisphere Nations

The three-quarter-century-old inter-American system faces a fateful decision.

Will it establish permanent peace-making machinery to deal with political upheavals like that in the Dominican Republic? Or will it treat the Dominican crisis as an isolated emergency and continue to oppose armed intervention in member states? Answers to these questions may be forthcoming at the 11th Inter-American Conference, scheduled to open at Rio de Janeiro on Aug. 4.

The Council of the Organization of American States has already shattered precedent by creating a multilateral force to maintain order in the Dominican Republic.

The United States nevertheless is pressing for establishment of a permanent inter-American peacekeeping force. President Johnson, speaking at Baylor University, May 28, said that "out of the Dominican crucible the 20 American nations must . . . forge a stronger shield against disaster," for "in today's world, with the enemies of freedom talking about wars of national liberation, the old distinction between civil war and international war has already lost much of its meaning."

Earlier, Secretary of State Dean Rusk had told reporters in Washington that "The hemisphere needs to take up again the question of constituting some standby forces on a continuous basis, on prompt call, and the organization of political machinery for making hemispheric decisions promptly in the face of fast-moving events."

Dispatch of American troops to the Dominican Republic stirred bitter memories in Latin America. The United States has yet to live down the era of "dollar diplomacy," extending roughly

from 1903 to 1934, during which it intervened in no fewer than nine Caribbean and Central American nations.

Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic are cases in point. Both countries experienced long periods of occupation by American marines. And both fell victim to military dictators not long after the marines left. Similarly Fulgencio Batista came to power in Cuba soon after the United States had relinquished its special treaty rights of intervention in the island republic.

Adoption of the "policy of good neighbor" in 1933 committed this country to non-intervention on Latin America. Still, the United States did not hesitate to make its influence felt decisively in Guatemala in 1954, and it supported the attempt of anti-Castro refugees to invade Cuba in 1961. The object in both cases was to thwart the spread of communism in the Western Hemisphere.

Both of the latter "interventions" were carried out in secret by the Central Intelligence Agency; Washington officially disclaimed all responsibility. Because the Guatemalan revolt was successful, the CIA's role was not fully disclosed until years later. But failure of the Bay of Pigs affair in Cuba allowed of no such cover-up.

Significantly, President Kennedy said three days after the invasion that "If the nations of this hemisphere should fail to meet their commitments against outside Communist penetration, then this government will not hesitate in meeting its primary obligations, which are to the security of our nation."

This is a proper policy. Latin Americans had best realize fully that the United States simply cannot afford to allow communists to engulf them. It is not only to their interest that we stand by this policy but our own.